

## Appendix I

### **Memorandum of Understanding**

for formation of the

### **Southwest Coordinating Group**

Between

**USDA - Forest Service**, Region 3

and the

**USDI - Bureau of Land Management**, Arizona and New Mexico

and the

**USDI - National Park Service**, Intermountain Region

and the

**USDI - U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service**, Southwest Region

and the

**USDI - Bureau of Indian Affairs**, Western, Southwest, and Navajo Regions

and the

**State of New Mexico** - Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department  
Forestry Division - State Forester

and the

**State of Arizona** - State Land Department - State Forester

#### **I. Authority**

- A. Joint Powers Agreement between the State of New Mexico and the Federal Agencies of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior with Fire Responsibilities.
- B. Joint Powers Agreement between the State of Arizona and the Federal Agencies of the Departments of Agriculture and Interior with Fire Responsibilities.
- C. Interagency Agreement between the **USDI - Bureau of Land Management**, **Bureau of Indian Affairs**, **National Park Service**, and **USDI - U.S. Fish and Wildlife**

## Appendix I

Service, and the USDA - Forest Service, of February, 1997.

### II. Purpose and Function

To establish and maintain a group, known as the **Southwest Coordinating Group** (SWCG). The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to expand on the Joint Powers Agreement between the States of Arizona and New Mexico and the Federal Agencies to provide a forum to achieve consistency and continuity in all aspects of fire and incident management within the Southwest Area. The mission of the Southwest Coordinating Group is to enhance the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of interagency fire management activities, and response to and support of non-fire emergencies through FEMA declared disasters or emergency payments through subsequent documents.

Agency members of the Group shall, by signature of individual agency representatives to this MOU, be delegated authority to act on behalf of their respective agencies for purposes of planning, priority setting, and implementation of all current agency policies, directions, and standards for fire and incident management activities within the Southwest Area.

Recommendations to establish new policies in the area of Fire Management shall be referred to Agency Administrators for approval prior to implementation. The Group shall function as the interagency advisory group charged to enhance the safety, efficiency and effectiveness of interagency fire management activities, and response and support of non-fire emergencies.

### III. Membership

Membership will be limited to agencies with statewide or regional wildland fire management responsibilities, consisting of one assigned representative from each of the signatory agencies indicated above. Members will have full authority to speak to the issues for his/her respective organization. In addition, the Southwest Coordination Center Director will function as a permanent, non-voting member of the Group.

Each agency shall retain authority for establishing the individual representative, as well as the length of service to the SWCG.

### IV. Organization

A chairperson and vice chairperson shall be selected and serve two years. Other officers shall be selected from the membership as needed. The chair, or acting, will represent the Group at National, Regional, and Local meetings and serves as the initial point of contact for group business.

An Executive Secretary, committee members, task group members, or work group members needed to perform assigned responsibilities may be selected as needed.

## **Appendix I**

### **Zone Boards**

The Group will review, advise, and assist the zone boards on training, Type II team management, zone MAC groups, coordination of fire closure, restrictions, and rescissions, and other fire and incident management activities. The Group will identify a member to act as liaison for each zone board.

### **Committees and Work Groups**

The Group may establish committees or work groups to carry out specific work assignments. Committee or work group reports shall be submitted to the Group for review, approval, and further action.

The Group shall establish a charter for each of the committees or work groups that are established on a recurrent or permanent basis. Work groups, task forces, or temporary committees may be established with verbal or informal written directions from the Group.

A Group member will be assigned to each, committee or work group as a liaison.

## **V. Fire and Incident Management and Incident Activities Delegated to the Group**

- A. The Southwest Coordinating Group is the Geographic Area Coordinating Group (GACG) for the Southwest Area.
- B. The Group will establish, review, revise, and approve the SWCG Handbook.
- C. The Group will function as, or provide personnel for, the Multi-Agency Coordination Group (Area MAC) as required by agency-specific direction or by the Southwest Coordination Center Director.
- D. The Group will act on behalf of their respective agencies for purposes of planning, priority setting, resource positioning, mobilization, and allocation, and implementation of all current agency policies, directions, and standards for fire and incident management activities within the Southwest Area.
- E. The Group will approve the Southwest Coordination Center Operation Plan and oversee and direct the Southwest Coordination Center Director, and interagency personnel on SWCC staff.
- F. The Group will establish and maintain a formal process for sharing Intelligence and Predictive Services information.
- G. The Group will establish procedures for selection and management of the Southwest Area Type I Incident Management Teams.

## **Appendix I**

H. The Group will annually establish, review, revise, and approve the Southwest Area Mobilization Guide, Southwest MAC Group Guide and Southwest Area Fire Fighter Crew Management Guidelines.

I. The Group will perform other functions as assigned or directed by Agency Administrators.

### **VI. Agency Responsibilities**

Agency Administrators will support the development and maintenance of fire and incident management skills in their personnel. Agency Administrators are provided individual agency responsibilities through their directives to develop, maintain, and make available those employees with wildland fire management skills. The investment in training and experience of these personnel increases with time, as does their managerial ability. Making these skilled personnel available for continued participation is good management and efficient use of the funding involved in employee development.

Individual employees of federal and state land management agencies will be prepared to support wildland fire as directed by Agency Administrators.

### **VII. FINANCE**

Each agency's financial contribution will be dependent on funds appropriated for this purpose and will be limited to expenses incurred by representatives of the agency performing agency approved actions.

Nothing herein shall be construed as obligating any of the signatory agencies to expend funds of the United States, or the States of Arizona or New Mexico, in any contract or obligation for future payment of the work in excess of appropriations authorized by law and administratively allocated for this work.

### **VIII. Agreement**

This MOU is effective between the signatory agencies upon the date of their signature. It shall remain in effect for 5 years from the date of signatures, or until terminated by mutual consent of all parties.

Any party may withdraw from the MOU by giving thirty (30) days' written notice, withdrawal by a party will not effect the other parties. The terms of this Agreement may be modified by written amendment with consent of all signatories. All signatories and/or their representative shall meet at least once annually to review the operation of this Agreement.

## Appendix I

### IX. Exclusions

This MOU shall not be construed to incur benefits to any parties not signatory hereto, except where such benefits may occur from other agreements and/or associations with a signatory agency.

### X. Approvals

Each signatory agency shall be provided a signatory page which, when signed and returned to the Coordination Center Director, Southwest Geographic Area, shall be attached to this document and become a part of this document. The Agency Administrator shall sign approval and delegation authority to his/her agency representative on this signatory page.

Signatory pages below are hereby incorporated into this document and made a part hereof.

#### APPROVAL AND DELEGATION OF AUTHORITY

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the Aviation and Fire Management Assistant Director for Fire Operations to act on behalf of the Southwestern Region, USDA, U. S. Forest Service, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

Regional Forester  
Southwestern Region

USDA, U. S. Forest Service

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the State Fire Management Officer, to act on behalf of the Arizona State, USDI, Bureau of Land Management, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

State Director, Arizona  
USDI, Bureau of Land Management

## Appendix I

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the State Fire Management Officer, to act on behalf of the New Mexico State, USDI Bureau of Land Management, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

State Director, New Mexico  
USDI, Bureau of Land Management

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the Group Leader, Branch of Aviation and Fire Management, to act on behalf of the Intermountain Regional Office, USDI, National Park Service, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

Regional Director  
Intermountain Region  
USDI, National Park Service

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the Regional Fire Management Coordinator, to act on behalf of the Southwest Region, USDI, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

Director  
Southwestern Region  
USDI, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## Appendix I

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the Assistant Director, BIA, Tri-Area, to act on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Phoenix Area, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

Regional Director  
Western Regional Office  
USDI, Bureau of Indian Affairs

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the Assistant Director, BIA, Tri-Area, to act on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Albuquerque Area, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

Regional Director  
Southwestern Regional Office  
USDI, Bureau of Indian Affairs

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the Assistant Director, BIA, Tri-Area, to act on behalf of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Area, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

Regional Director  
Navajo Regional Office  
USDI, Bureau of Indian Affairs

## Appendix I

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the Chief of Fire Management, to act on behalf of the State of New Mexico, Energy, Minerals, and Natural Resources Department - Forestry Division, State Forester, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

State Forester  
State of New Mexico

I approve the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the Southwest Coordinating Group (SWCG) and hereby designate and delegate the State Fire Management Officer, to act on behalf of the State of Arizona, State Land Department, State Forester, as my representative to this group. This designation and authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded.

Date

State Forester  
State of Arizona